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- Dwayne Moore sentenced to life without parole for Mattapan massacre
- Hearing was emotional for victims' families after enduring two trials
- Defense attorney says he will appeal
- Killer's mother charged with assaulting photographer {page 02}

'At least now their souls can rest'

▶ Shooting victim Simba Martin's family reacted during the sentencing of Dwayne Moore at Boston's Suffolk Superior Court yesterday .

WENDY MAEDA/GLOBE

home

Martha Stewart will e-vite you to her party

The woman who sets the trends in entertaining shares surprising advice {page 25}

'best of' series

Our favorite retail and fashion picks

From MBTA maps that keep people from seeing you naked to top vintage shops {pages 12-13}

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By the numbers

41

The MBTA Transit Police Department graduated 41 new officers from its academy yesterday during a morning ceremony at Faneuil Hall. It was the 30th Municipal Police Officers Class to graduate from the academy. METRO

Today's local tweet

"Is it spring time? I need the Red Sox in my life. #gosox #beantown"

HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, @TREYTREYPICTUM, BUT WE'RE FAR FROM SPRING.

In the news

Cops investigate body in the Fens

BOSTON. A man was found dead in the Fens yesterday morning, and police are trying to determine the cause.

Officers responded to 59 The Fenway for a report of a person in need of help in the park at about 7:30 a.m., police said. The man was found near the Boston Fire Department's alarm building.

The man was not identified, and police are investigating. METRO

Suffolk Downs, Ceasars partner with Citi Center

BOSTON. Citi Performance Arts Center plans to work with Suffolk Downs and Ceasars Entertainment, should they get a license for a proposed casino at the Revere racetrack.

Under the agreement, Citi Center would collaborate on entertainment activities at the proposed casino and would gain access to Caesars' rewards program and its 40 million customers.

The state's gaming law requires all casino operators to reach agreements with "not-for-profit or municipally owned performance venues" in the region. SHNS

DeLeo's bid to friend Zuckerberg is ignored

BOSTON. House Speaker Robert DeLeo's public appeal in May to Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, urging him to take another look at Massachusetts as a place to do business, has apparently gone unnoticed by the Internet giant, he said yesterday.

DeLeo, who hoped to woo the company with Massachusetts roots back to the state, never received any communication back after he wrote an open letter to Zuckerberg suggesting the company, along with others like it in the Silicon Valley, consider expanding in Massachusetts. "I have not heard anything," DeLeo said.

Zuckerberg

Emotional day at hearing

Dwayne Moore is sentenced to life in prison for Mattapan massacre killings ● His mother attacks a news photographer ● Families of victims say guilty verdict finally brings 'a little peace' after two trials this year

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ Victims' family members, including Patricia Washum, embrace after yesterday's sentencing hearing.

Ebony Flonory, the sister of Eyanna, was happy with the guilty verdict.

As the court clerk told Dwayne Moore that he would spend the rest of his natural life in prison for killing four people, including a 2-year-old boy and the boy's mother, the family members of the victims hugged and raised their intertwined hands in the air.

It was a moment of relief for the families of 21-year-old Eyanna Flonory, 2-year-old Amanihotep Smith, 21-year-old Simba Martin and 22-year-old Levaughn Washum-Garrison, who thought their loved one's killer would never be brought to justice.

"I didn't think it was going to go too well, to be honest," said Patricia Washum, Levaughn's mother. "Just to have a verdict before the holidays, it's not going to bring back our loved ones, but at least we have a little peace to know that the people who did this will pay for it."

Dwayne Moore was sentenced yesterday to life without parole for the 2010 killings in Mattapan. A jury found him guilty on Monday of four counts of murder.

It was the second trial for Moore, whose first trial earlier this year ended in a deadlocked jury. Just hours before the jury returned their guilty verdict, they told the judge they were at an impasse, according to the Globe. However, the judge ordered them to try again.

Many of the victims' family members sat through the first trial and fewer of them sat through the retrial. Both trials included graphic testimony and evidence about the fatal shootings.

As a prosecutor talked about the murders in court yesterday, the family members shook their heads from side to side, held their hands over their mouths and clutched tissues that were wet with their tears. It was a familiar scene that had played out throughout much of the weeks of trial this year.

But yesterday there were also smiles, hugs and laughter from the families that had waited a long time for accountability. During the sentencing hearing, the families were able to speak to the court about how the murders have impacted them.

"We got a guilty verdict … that still doesn't bring none of them back," said Ebony Flonory, Eyanna's sister, as she cried while giving a victim impact statement.

Patricia Washum also gave a victim impact statement.

"Although the verdict will never replace our loved ones, at least now their souls can rest," she said.

The case will automatically be reviewed, and Moore's attorney said he would appeal.

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
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Quoted

"Just to have a verdict before the holidays, it's not going to bring back our loved ones, but at least we have a little peace to know that the people who did this will pay for it."
WASHUM

▶ Diann Holmes is led away by a court officer after allegedly hitting a Boston Herald photographer.

Photographer attacked

Diann Holmes, the mother of convicted killer Dwayne Moore, was being photographed on her way out of Suffolk Superior Court yesterday when she allegedly attacked a news photographer for the Boston Herald. Holmes, who has said she does not want her picture taken, went after the photographer with an umbrella. She was quickly removed by court officers.

She pleaded not guilty to assault and battery.

Defense doesn't rest at sentencing

John Amabile, Moore's attorney, continued his attack on prosecutors and said their request for four consecutive life sentences was "grandstanding."

He also continued with his assertion that investigators were "snookered, duped and hustled" by the person who actually committed the shootings, Kimani Washington.

Washington will serve about 16 years in prison for his role in the home invasion. He testified against Moore.

Suffolk District Attorney Dan Conley dismissed Amabile's accusations.

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In the news

Citing 'crumbling roads,' group seeks funding

MASSACHUSETTS. There is a $362 million funding gap between what Massachusetts cities and towns require to maintain roads in a "state of good repair" and the amount of state funding currently available for local roadways, according to Massachusetts Municipal Association survey results released yesterday.

State funding for local roads, known as Chapter 90, is currently at $200 million per year. The MMA, which represents cities and towns, is asking for a 50 percent funding increase to begin more aggressively addressing the gap and to bring the annual allocation up to $300 million per year for the next five years.

In January, the Patrick administration and the Legislature are planning to discuss a new transportation financing proposal. **SHNS**

362M

There is a $362 million funding gap between what Massachusetts cities and towns require to maintain roads in good repair and the amount of funding currently available.

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'Shell shocked': Chilly turtles wash up on South Shore

NE AQUARIUM

▶ The Aquarium's chief veterinarian attends to a loggerhead sea turtle.

A record number of stunned sea turtles have washed up on local beaches this year, according to the New England Aquarium, which has taken in two since Monday.

There have been 164 sea turtles rescued alive this year, smashing the old record of 127 set in 1999.

A live loggerhead turtle was rescued from Nantasket Beach yesterday, and on Monday another 40-pounder was rescued in the Humarock section of Scituate.

Aquarium officials are puzzled by the unusual stranding locations but are asking for the public's help in watching for more turtles on South Shore beaches.

Strandings on the South Shore are very rare events, and most that are found there are dead.

Recently, some well-meaning beach walkers tried to return a sea turtle to the frigid waters from which it was trying to escape, but aquarium officials said that people who discover the chilly turtles should call for help.

Washed-up turtles with body temperatures in the 40s and with heartbeats as low as one per minute may appear dead but can still be re-warmed and revived at the aquarium's off-site animal care center in the Quincy Shipyard.

Be on the lookout

People who come across a sea turtle on the South Shore, whether alive or appearing dead, should call the Aquarium's Marine Animal Hotline at 617-973-5427 or contact a local animal control officer.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
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▶ A loggerhead that was rescued from Nantasket Beach.

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In the news

Report: Cape facing workforce challenges

CAPE COD. With limited higher education opportunities and the state's oldest workforce, employers on Cape Cod and the Islands face extra hurdles finding younger employees to replace retiring Baby Boomers, according to a report released yesterday.

The 23-community area, anchored by larger communities like Barnstable, Falmouth, Yarmouth, Sandwich, and Bourne, was one of only two state labor markets where the population declined during the past decade. And with 56.4 percent of its labor force 45 years old or older, it is the only region to have more than 50 percent of its workforce in that age range, according to the report authored by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. **SHNS**

Tree. Dedication

▶ Maureen Cabral of Winchester hangs an ornament on the Massachusetts Gold Star Families Tree in honor of her husband, Lt. John Cabral, who died in Vietnam.

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

State House tree for the veterans

Families of military members who have given their lives helped decorate this year's Massachusetts Gold Star Families Tree at the State House. Yesterday's dedication included relatives of service members, who decorated the tree with customized ornaments in memory of their loved ones. METRO

Local political experts talk about rumors of Ben Affleck Senate run

Some Boston-area political science experts weighed in yesterday after WBZ News Radio reported that Cambridge-bred movie star Ben Affleck might jump into the Senate race if Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry takes over as Secretary of State.

E-mails to Affleck's camp were not returned as of press time yesterday, but with political analysts eyeing the "Argo" star, Metro reached out to some local political experts to see how the 40-year-old actor/director would fare if he did decide to run.

"What's different about Affleck is normally these things are done as (actors') careers are waning," said professor Thomas Patterson, who teaches at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. "It would be a little bit unusual ...

▶ Affleck

He is pretty much at the peak of his career."

His personal wealth, star-power and prior push for Senate star Elizabeth Warren would likely give him a leg up in a Senate race.

"He probably has the internal fire, but it's a pretty serious decision," Patterson said, adding that if he did decide to run, his movie-star status would not necessarily guarantee him a victory.

"It would be a question of who else is in the mix. If it were five politicians against Affleck, I'd bet on him, but we'd have to see what the lineup looks like."

Until Affleck comes out and says he will run, UMass Boston Political Science professor Paul Watanabe is skeptical that it will happen.

"There is a big difference between someone saying they would be interested in (running) and someone actually doing it," he said. "But he would certainly liven up the race if he joined in. ... He might as well jump in the pool."

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
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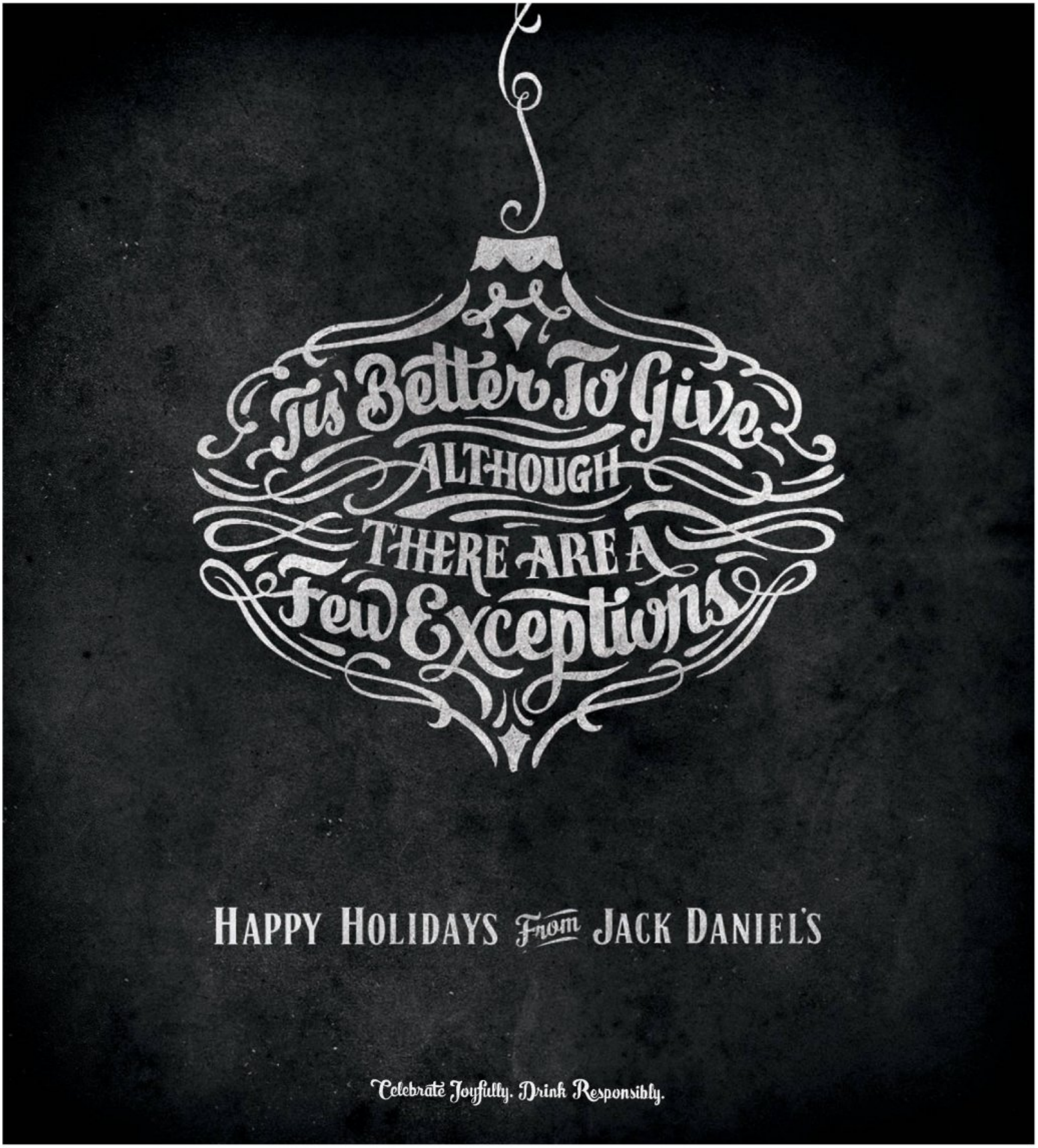

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Russia sends its ships; oranges getting hot

Russia: Sea you later, Syria

▶ Russia is sending warships to evacuate its citizens from Syria.

STR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Russia sends warships for possible Syria evac

Russia has sent warships to the Mediterranean Sea in case it needs to evacuate its citizens trapped by the civil war in Syria, a naval source was quoted as saying on Tuesday.

Their departure points to growing concern in Moscow, a staunch ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, about rebel advances on the Syrian capital Damascus, suggesting Russia is pressing ahead quickly with evacuation preparations announced by a diplomat last week.

In a further indication that Moscow believes an evacuation may soon be required, the head of Russia's paratroopers was quoted as saying his units were ready to take part.

The naval source told Interfax news agency that the five vessels, including two armed landing craft and a tanker, had left a Baltic port on Monday and could be in the Mediterranean indefinitely. **REUTERS**

When $4B is too little

Rig worker's dad seeks to stop BP deal

The father of a man killed in the 2010 Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion has asked a U.S. judge to reject BP's $4 billion criminal plea deal as insufficient. Billy Fred Anderson, father of deceased rig tool pusher Jason Anderson, suggested that London-based BP should be fined $45 billion, the company's estimated annual revenue. He made the request under a federal law that allows crime victims to comment on plea deals before they are formalized by the court. **BLOOMBERG**

▶ Oil rig

Hospitalized in Iraq

Iraq president suffers stroke

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd who has mediated among Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurdish parties, was in the hospital on Tuesday after suffering a stroke that left him in "critical but stable condition," government officials and lawmakers said. Without Talabani, Iraq would lose an influential peacemaker who often eased tensions in the fragile power-sharing government and negotiated in the growing rift over oil between Baghdad and the Kurdistan region. **REUTERS**

S. Koreans take to polls

S. Korea votes amid military, jobs woes

South Koreans vote for a new president on Wednesday against a backdrop of a hostile North Korea and a slowing economy, in a battle between the daughter of a former military ruler and a man her father jailed decades ago for political activism.

Conservative candidate Park Geun-hye had a narrow lead in polls published last week, the last allowed under election rules. If she wins, she would be the first woman leader of the country, which is still largely run by men in dark suits. The 60-year-old daughter of Park Chung-hee has pledged dialogue with isolated North Korea. **REUTERS**

40M South Koreans eligible to vote in the election

Orange alert

Orange juice jumps to seven-month high

Orange-juice futures climbed to a seven-month high on speculation that damage to citrus groves from dry weather in Florida, the world's second-largest grower, will be more extensive than the government forecast.

Precipitation in the state will be below normal during the first half of January, Donald Keeney, a senior meteorologist at MDA Information Systems Inc. in Gaithersburg, Md., said today in an e-mail. On Dec. 11, the U.S. Department of Agriculture cut its forecast for Florida output by 5.2 percent. **BLOOMBERG**

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Newtown students return to class after school massacre

Students returned to school in the shattered Connecticut town of Newtown on Tuesday for the first time since a gunman's rampage killed 26 people in an elementary school, altering the gun-control debate in Washington and forcing a retailer to pull guns from shelves.

Sandy Hook Elementary, where 20-year-old Adam Lanza gunned down a score of 6- and 7-year-olds and six adults on Friday, will remain closed. It is an active crime scene, with police coming and going past a line of 26 Christmas trees, one for each victim, decorated with ornaments, stuffed animals and balloons in the school colors of green and white.

When Sandy Hook students go back to school, it will be at the unused Chalk Hill School in nearby Monroe, where a sign across the street read, "Welcome Sandy Hook Elementary!"

Police have warned it could take months for them to finish their investigation, which was set back because Lanza smashed his computer's hard drive, preventing police from retrieving any data, The New York Times reported, citing a senior law enforcement official.

The rest of Newtown's schools reopened with grief counselors and police present, though it was unclear how many of the town's 4,700 students would attend.

"It's going to be awful, doing the things we used to do," said Miguel, 16, who stopped by a doughnut shop on his way to Newtown High School. "There's going to be a lot of tears."

The massacre of young children shocked Americans who had grown accustomed to mass shootings, prompting some U.S. lawmakers to call for tighter gun restrictions and pressuring one private equity firm to sell its investment in a gunmaker. **REUTERS**

NRA silence

The nation's powerful gun industry lobby, the National Rifle Association, has remained silent on the Newtown shooting.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Children return to school yesterday in Newtown, Conn., four days after 20 children and six adults were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Pols push for restrictions

Several Democratic lawmakers have sought a new push for U.S. gun restrictions, including a ban on assault weapons such as the Bushmaster AR-15 used by Lanza, who carried hundreds of rounds of ammunition in extra clips and shot all of his victims repeatedly.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ AR-15 similar to the one used in the Newtown shooting

Backlash prompts Bushmaster rifle maker sale

The company whose AR-15 type Bushmaster rifle was used in the Newtown school massacre in Connecticut will be immediately put up for sale, its private equity owner Cerberus Capital Management LP said on Tuesday in response to investor concerns.

The secretive private equity firm risked the ire of investors, which include some of the largest U.S. public pension funds, after its investment in Freedom Group Inc., owner of Bushmaster Firearms International that makes the rifle, came under public scrutiny.

The pressure on Cerberus to sell the firearms maker comes as it seeks up to $3.5 billion from investors for its latest buyout fund. **REUTERS**

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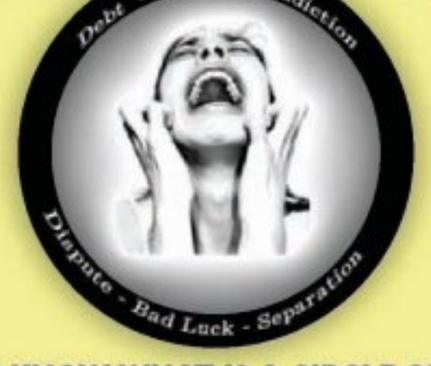

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the best of 2012: retail & fashion

The best of 2012: retail and fashion

'Best of' series

All week long, Metro will be highlighting our selections of the city's best — from dining spots to nightlife destinations — of 2012. Check back tomorrow for our picks in health and beauty.

Best place to learn about wine while drinking it:

The Urban Grape
303 Columbus Ave., Boston
857-250-2509
www.theurbangrape.com
It's not easy picking out a wine — that is, of course, unless you put yourself through the palate-101 process at the new South End outpost for everything grapey.

Best place to shop for a 'Mad Men' costume:

Artifaktori Vintage
22a College Ave., Somerville
617-776-3708
www.artifaktori.com
Love vintage but don't have the patience to sift through flea-market trunks? This small, artsy boutique is full of '50s and '60s frocks, plus other retro trinkets. If Davis Square is a hike for you, check out the new Beacon Hill location or the Artifaktori Etsy shop online.

Best shop for keeping your head covered in style:

Salmagundi
765 Centre St., Jamaica Plain
617-522-5047
www.salmagundiboston.com
Right in the middle of oh-so-alternative J.P. sits this classic hat shop "for ladies and gents," whose aesthetic is so contrary to the organic, DIY thrift-shop stereotype we just lazily associated with the neighborhood that it may actually be the hippest spot there. These hats, in such models as the standard fedora and 1920s flapper girl, are custom-made for the shop, ensuring both classiness and uniqueness. The only problem may be that your new hat will be so slick you won't have an outfit to justify it — but that isn't Salmagudi's problem.

Best place for a girlie day out:

Louis/Salon Mario Russo/ Sam's
60 Northern Ave., Boston
617-262-6100
www.louisboston.com
Call it a mini "Sex and the City" vacation all under one roof. Hanging out at Louis in the harbor means a day of shopping, indulging in a hairdo at Salon Mario Russo and following up with drinks and dinner upstairs at Sam's, where you can raise a glass and propose a toast to a credit card that hopefully has a comfortably long line of credit.

Best store for smiles and service:

Barneys
100 Huntington Ave., Boston
617-385-3300
www.barneys.com
Maybe the members of the staff just enjoy working in the Boston Barneys store. Whatever it is, please keep it up, because it's nice to be greeted with warm smiles — even when we're only browsing — instead of blank stares. Maybe because the full name of the store is Barneys New York, the management has launched a kill-'em-with-kindness campaign to try to get us all to just quit it with that whole "Yankees Suck!" thing already.

Best record store for the hipper-than-hip

Weirdo Records
844 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
857-413-0154
www.weirdorecords.com
This record shop isn't for the newly minted college indie kid who just discovered Pavement — stay back, kid, you haven't even graduated from Newbury Comics yet. True to its name, this hole-in-the-wall specializes in the obscure, eccentric and outre. Looking for Brazilian fuzz-rock or Cambodian surf-pop from the '60s? This is your joint. And by the way, college indie kid, we were just ribbing — you should definitely check this place out. You'll be totally over Pavement before you even know it.

▶ Weirdo Records owner Angela Sawyer shows off her favorite records at her Cambridge shop.

▶ Ward Maps owner Steven Beaucher shows that the MBTA map shower curtain can also work as a cape. We congratulate his strategic placement of Wonderland.

ERIN BALDASSARI/METRO

Best store for creative gift-giving:

Ward Maps
1735 Mass. Ave. Cambridge
617-497-0737
www.wardmaps.com
Skip the gift cards and visit this Porter Square shop when birthday and holiday shopping. A vintage map of your mother's hometown? Check! A shower curtain with the MBTA routes? Check! Thoughtful, unique presents for all? Check.

Best British invasion since the Beatles:

Ted Baker
201 Newbury St., Boston
617-450-8339
www.tedbaker-london.com
With apologies to Duran Duran, Oasis and now One Direction, those weren't invasions. That happens every decade, and when it does, it's really just an imposition. Kidding! What we love about Ted Baker, however, is that the store brings the best of Brit cheeky attitude and streetwise fashion and adds a personal Boston note in its Mad Hatter's Tea Party decor.

Best planet-friendly clothing (large scale):

H&M
100 Newbury St., Boston
855-466-7467
www.hm.com
While we're speaking British, let's discuss H&M's organic cotton knickers. Sorry, using that word might have been confusing. These panties aren't the Bridget Jones granny variety. These are pretty, and they not only help the planet, but they don't hurt the pocket either. This three-pack costs about the same most lingerie shops charge for one pair. So what if they're a big chain? If all big chains were this eco-conscious, the world would be a better place.

Best planet-friendly clothing (smaller scale):

Envi
134 Beach St., Boston
617-267-3684
www.shopenvi.com
Shopahalics can acquire more material possessions guilt-free at this eco-conscious boutique. Organic material and

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▶ It's not all men's clothes at Bobby From Boston! A shopper named Abby Westerhold is pictured here trying on vintage clothing styled by Bobby employee Rebecca Trueblood.

ERIN BALDASSARI/METRO

▶ Service manager Charlie Schubert repairs beat-up bicycles for reuse overseas at Bikes Not Bombs in Jamaica Plain.

Best bike-to-work motivator:

Bikes Not Bombs
18 Bartlett Sq., Jamaica Plain
617-522-0222
www.bikesnotbombs.org
Zoom past all those cars lined up in rush-hour traffic (but stop at red lights, please) and bike to work outfitted in gear from this haven for cyclists. Don't stop there: Learn to fix your bike at one of the BNB mechanics classes, pick up some spare parts and support the shop's mission for social change.

▶ Comicazi in Somerville sells graphic novels, toys, games and vintage action figures like these guys.

ERIN BALDASSARI/METRO

sweatshop-free manufacturing explain the higher-than-average prices, but bargain hunters can go green (and save some green) by skimming the sale rack.

Best place to dress up junior fashionistas:

The Red Wagon
69 Charles St., Boston
617-523-9402
www.theredwagon.com
There are certain adorable things you can only pull off when you're in the single digits, so wear them while you can, kids. Like cable-knit sweaters with puppies and trucks on them. This is also a go-to spot for baby shower gifts that will make everybody else at the shower look like horrible gift-givers. Do you really want to do that though?

Trendiest workout wear:

Lululemon
337 Newbury St., Boston
617-867-6561
www.lululemon.com
Everybody knows it's easier to get your butt to the gym when you have a closet full of cute racer-back tanks and moisture-wicking yoga pants. And this chain offers great perks: discounts if you work in the health industry, and complimentary hemming for everyone.

Best place to get dressed up in an outfit that might make people think you work at Saloon:

Bobby from Boston
19 Thayer St., Boston
617-423-9299
The problem with a lot of vintage clothing shops is that they tend to cater more to women than men, which isn't surprising — women tend to have more clothes to begin with. Fortunately for us Bean-dwelling dudes, there's Bobby's, a vintage shop where the gender ratio is reversed. Films like "Titanic" and shows like "Boardwalk Empire" have patronized Bobby for the authentic period look, so you're sure to find what you need to become a fixture at the Davis Square bar Saloon, which we praised yesterday for its old-timey authenticity. You could also fashion yourself as a robber baron or perhaps just a restrained Nick Carraway. Bobby from Boston is also old-fashioned in the sense that you will not find this store online. If you really need to find out more before visiting, on Yelp it has 69 positive reviews. One Yelper, Katie, wrote that visiting the store made her upset that she isn't a man. Sorry, Katie.

Best mid-century mod knick-knack shopping:

The Gropius House
68 Baker Bridge Rd., Lincoln
781-259-8098
www.historicnewengland.org
One of Massachusetts' most stylish imports, Mrs. Gropius, wife of Bauhaus originator Walter, knew a thing or two about real style. The gift shop at the Gropius House has a selection of jewelry inspired by Mrs. G., and other cool mod stuff, too.

Best store to give a little Bahston:

Newbury Comics
332 Newbury St., Boston
617-236-4930
www.newburycomics.com
When it comes to gifts that say Boston, Newbury Comics is the wicked-good-time-iest place to shop for friends. Oh, and they also sell music and comics and really any other new pop culture thing you could ever want.

Best four-season flea market:

SoWa Vintage Market
460 Harrison Ave., Boston
800-403-8305
www.sowaopenmarket.com
The outdoor season is over until next summer, but you can still dig for retro treasures all winter long inside. This year the food trucks will be there, too, in the restored power station next door at 540 Harrison Ave. every Sunday.

Best place to spoil Rover:

Fish & Bone
217 Newbury St., Boston
blog.thefishandbone.com
This shop is one part Whole Foods, another part Brookstone for your furry, four-legged family members. There's an entire wall devoted to colorful collars and leashes, and every treat a dog or cat could imagine. The staffers can also answer all of your pet nutrition questions.

Best chance to reunite with your beloved action figures of yore:

Comicazi
407 Highland Ave., Somerville
617-666-2664
www.comicazi.com
Like most comic book shops, Comicazi has graphic novels, new issues of the week, geek gaming supplies, DVDs, etc., and a regular series of events, from game night to a 21+ "Drink and Draw" night (sounds hilarious). But what sets this place apart is the staggeringly comprehensive collection of mint-in-package action figures from the past three decades that sits in at the far end. Don't worry if you're rendered comatose with nostalgia — these guys are used to it here.

Best reason not to buy books from Amazon:

Brookline Booksmith
279 Harvard St., Brookline
617-566-6660
www.brooklinebooksmith.com
This bookstore makes it easy to support a local business. Visit to see big-name authors at events, get a top-notch reading recommendation from a staffer and peruse the Booksmith's huge collection of used books in the basement.

Best bookstore for dabbling in the occult:

Seven Stars
731 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
617-547-1317
This shop is loaded to the gills with books on dubious-but-engrossing subjects like astrology, UFOs, alternative medicine, history, psychology, conspiracy theories, witchcraft and paranormal phenomena, as well as more mainstream religious and spiritual fare. The staffers also do tarot readings and have a case full of crystals. If you do not know what crystals do aside from look pretty, Seven Stars has lots of books on that also.

Best shop for aspiring chefs:

KitchenWares by Blackstone's
215 Newbury St., Boston
857-366-4237
www.kitchenwaresboston.com
Don't be deceived by this store's tiny size. It's well-organized and packed with kitchen essentials and fun gadgets, cookbooks and gourmet foodstuff. They offer classes, too.

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200 TOURING

STK# M13-0335 MSRP: $22,955

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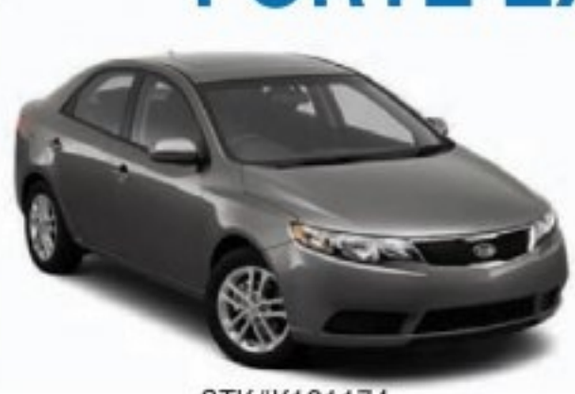

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THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

The feed ...

▶ Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

@SteveMartinToGo
Still not feeling funny, nor is funny feeling appropriate.

@Sethrogen
After watching Homeland and Zero Dark Thirty, I'm really thinking the CIA should release a line of sexy lady's pantsuits.

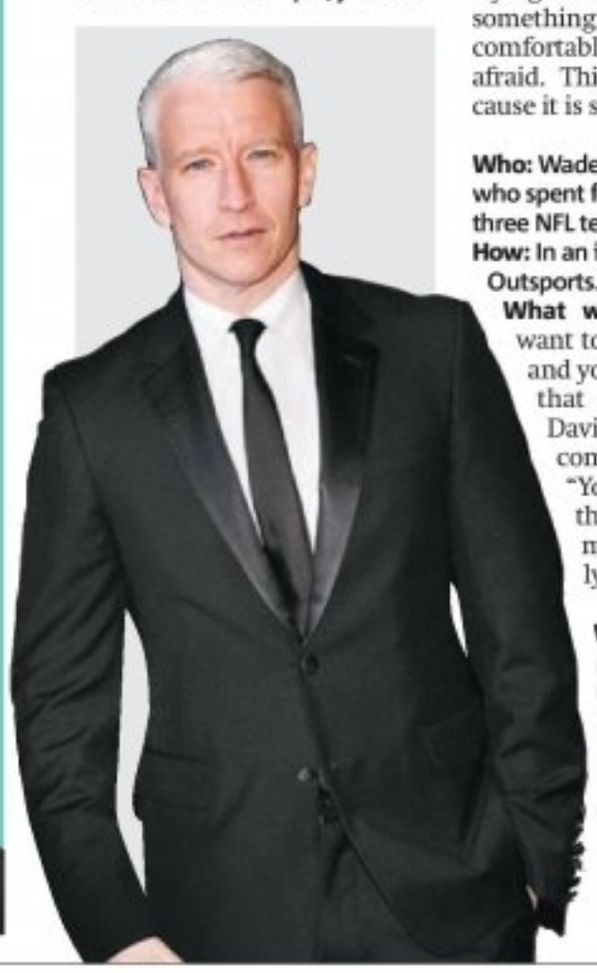
@AlbertBrooks
Gerard Depardieu gives up French citizenship and moves to Belgium. Taxes or waffles?

Rogen

Hidden no more: These stars 'came out' in 2012

A celebrity coming out of the closet is almost (almost) becoming a non-event; we're far from the days of **Ellen DeGeneres** and **Lance Bass** appearing on magazine covers. But it still makes news. Here are some of the biggest announcements of 2012:

Who: Anderson Cooper, journalist
How: In an e-mail to blogger Andrew Sullivan
What was said: "The fact is, I'm gay," Cooper wrote. "Always have been, always will be." Cooper, who was the subject of rumors for years, addressed his silence. "I have given some the mistaken impression that I am trying to hide something — something that makes me uncomfortable, ashamed or even afraid. This is distressing because it is simply not true."



Who: Wade Davis, a cornerback who spent four preseasons with three NFL teams
How: In an interview with Outsports.com
What was said: "You just want to be one of the guys, and you don't want to lose that sense of family," Davis said about not coming out sooner. "Your biggest fear is that you'll lose that camaraderie and family."

Who: Orlando Cruz, professional boxer
How: In a public statement
What was said: "I have always been and always will be a proud gay man."

Who: Matt Bomer, television star
How: Thanking his longtime partner, Simon Halls, and their kids upon accepting an award for activism
What was said: "I'd really especially like to thank my beautiful family: Simon, Kit, Walker, Henry. Thank you for teaching me what unconditional love is."

Who: Lee "Uncle Poodle" Thompson, redneck
How: Appearing on "Here Comes Honey Boo Boo"
What was said: Thompson's homosexuality isn't a huge to-do on the show; he's out and proud. As Alana "Honey Boo Boo" Thompson says in the season finale, "ain't nothin' wrong with bein' a little gay."

Talking points

Barrymore doesn't 'feel like a grown-up'

Drew Barrymore has done a lot of growing up, but that doesn't mean she feels like an adult. "The mistakes, the potholes, the journeys, the bad patterns — all of it is so much clearer to me now, but I still don't totally feel like a grown-up," the 37-year-old new mom tells Allure magazine. "Maybe I never will."

Death Cab marriage is officially dead

Zooey Deschanel's marriage to Death Cab for Cutie frontman **Benjamin Gibbard** is officially over, with the former couple formalizing their divorce in a Los Angeles court last week, a little more than a year after separating, according to E! News. And the "New Girl" star appears to already be moving on, having been spotted recently walking hand-in-hand with new screenwriter boyfriend **Jamie Linden**.

▶ Deschanel and Gibbard

Romeo Beckham models for Burberry

Maybe he's just not that good with a soccer ball?

It was announced this week that at only 10 years old, **David** and **Victoria Beckham**'s son, **Romeo Beckham**, is the "baby face" of Burberry's spring/summer '13 campaign.

"We had such fun shooting the campaign," Burberry's creative director **Christopher Bailey** says.

Perhaps Burberry really wanted his dad, David Beckham, but then decided they to go with someone who has more of a mature, male voice?

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Also opening

▶ Sully, Mike and Boo are back for a more "in-depth" telling of "Monsters, Inc."

DISNEY/PIXAR

'Monsters' of a new dimension

The animated 2001 hit starring the vocal talents of Billy Crystal and John Goodman gets the 3-D treatment just in time for the holidays. It hits theaters today. METRO

A match made in Hollywood heaven

Rogen and Streisand have great onscreen chemistry as mother and son in their new comedy, 'The Guilt Trip'

'The Guilt Trip'
Director: Anne Fletcher
Cast: Seth Rogen, Barbra Streisand, Adam Scott
Rating: PG-13
Grade: ●●●●◐

SAM EMERSON

▶ Seth Rogen and Barbra Streisand hit the road in "The Guilt Trip," in theaters today.

It's not often that a movie exceeds expectations — especially if it's a comedy. Despite the fact that "The Guilt Trip" follows the road-trip-gone-wrong device that we've all seen before, director Anne Fletcher and screenwriter Dan Fogelman have provided a fresh take on the stereotypical storyline and presented us with one of the best comedies of the year. The pairing of Seth Rogen and Barbra Streisand is enough to get anyone to see this film, but most wouldn't expect that this is a story with substance and heart due to the witty screenplay and authentic, lovable characters. The plot follows an inventor (Rogen) who visits his mother (Streisand) before setting out on a road trip to sell his latest product, but then decides to invite her along for the ride out of pity. The best aspect of the film is the brilliant chemistry between Rogen and Streisand. Pairing these two together as mother and son is an idea that seems too good to be true, but it actually works.

OLIVIA MORROW
letters@metro.us

Tech in brief

Your smartphone is killing your sex life

Late-night Web browsing causes individuals to go to bed 90 minutes later than a decade ago, according to an informal online poll conducted by British comparison website Broadband Choices.co.uk (via the Daily Mail). Nearly 15 percent of respondents admit to having less sex because of Web-surfing habits. About 25 percent say they are browsing the Web in bed, while 15 percent prefer catching up on their favorite shows at night. These trends apply toward the young crowd; older respondents said they prefer settling down with a book.

JOANN PAN FOR Mashable
The Social Media Guide

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PETER PARADISE/RAVENWOLFE PHOTOGRAPHY

The Hubcracker!

▶ The dancers in "Urban Nutcracker" continue to bring a youthful energy to every performance.

'Urban Nutcracker' does such an admirable job of integrating Boston into its classic story that it has almost become a classic itself
We just wish they brought back a little bit of the Russian dance music

"Urban Nutcracker" might as well be called "The Boston Nutcracker." Tony Williams' interpretation of E.T.A. Hoffmann's Christmas story embraces the city's modern diversity with sets featuring the Public Garden, a strong performance-art community, multiracial and military families, a gay-friendly environment and all that is great about the Hub in 2012. The artistic director also melds the classic score of Tchaikovsky with the jazzy soundtrack of Duke Ellington.

The Epilogue captures the spirit of the season — Spanish-style. It's a street party featuring the tap, hip-hop and flamenco dancers from the Flamenco Dance Project and soul singing by the G-Clefs.

New costumes freshen up Act II as do new props for the tap dancers. An additional Chinese Dai dance that precedes the traditional Chinese music is interesting, but seems out of place. The omission of the original Russian dance music is a disappointment.

Standout performances include Boston Tap Company founder Sean Fielder, Minimeyer (Yo-el Cassell), jazzy Sugar Plum Fairy (Elizabeth Mochizuki) and Ice Cream Cart leads Jonathan Vandurburgh and Lindsey McGovern.

KATRINA T. LALLIER
katrina.lallier@metro.us

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Health notes

Don't shoot your eye out

Be careful when popping the champagne at midnight this New Year's — corks can travel 50 miles per hour when launched! To avoid any eye injuries, follow these directions from the American Academy of Ophthalmology on how to properly open a bottle of champagne:

Chilling your bubbly in advance can help you stay safe.

- **Chill sparkling wine and champagne to 45 degrees Fahrenheit or colder before opening.** The cork of a warm bottle is more likely to pop unexpectedly.
- **Don't shake the bottle.** Shaking increases the speed at which the cork leaves the bottle, thereby increasing your chances of severe eye injury.
- **Point the bottle at a 45-degree angle away from yourself and any bystanders** and hold down the cork with the palm of your hand while removing the wire hood on the bottle.
- **Place a towel over the entire top of the bottle and grasp the cork.**
- **Twist the bottle while holding the cork at a 45-degree angle to break the seal.** Counter the force of the cork using downward pressure as the cork breaks free from the bottle.

METRO

Here's how to keep your New Year's resolutions

When March rolls around, will you even remember the goals you set for yourself in 2013? Psychologist Jeremy Dean on how to stay on track

Another new year, another New Year's resolution. Whether you vow to stop smoking, lose weight, exercise more or take on another challenge, making the decision is the first step and committing to it is the second. Then comes the difficult part: sticking with it.

Dean also says that visualizing the positive and negative effects of your habit can be motivating.

Taking an internal inventory of your habits and why you have them is a good place to start, says psychologist Jeremy Dean, author of "Making Habits, Breaking Habits."

"A lot of habits are performed subconsciously," he says. "People light a cigarette or eat automatically. That's part of the reason it's hard to break a bad habit. Another problem is self-control issues on top of that."

Once you've done some soul-searching and are ready to change, Dean says it's less about deprivation and more about substitution. You need to also avoid situations that trigger the habit. For example, if you're trying to cut back on caffeine, turn your 3 p.m. coffee break into a walk around the office.

"It's a mistake to suppress the habit," he says. "Replace it with good ones instead. Make a plan for a new habit and link it to a situation where you perform the bad habit. Look for a point in the day when you will perform the new habit. Each time you repeat a behavior, the habit gets stronger. Over time, it will become automatic."

Go your own way

There are many common bad habits — smoking, overspending and nail-biting, to name a few — but success with quitting isn't universal:

- "It's important to do what's right for you," says Dean.

"We're told that exercising in the morning is best. Well, I'm not getting up early to exercise, so I exercise in the afternoon — it suits my schedule. Also, tweak your approach. If it doesn't work the first time, then move it around a little until it feels right. Breaking habits can take experimentation until it works for you."

LINDA CLARKE
letters@metro.us

HOLIDAY FIT GUIDE

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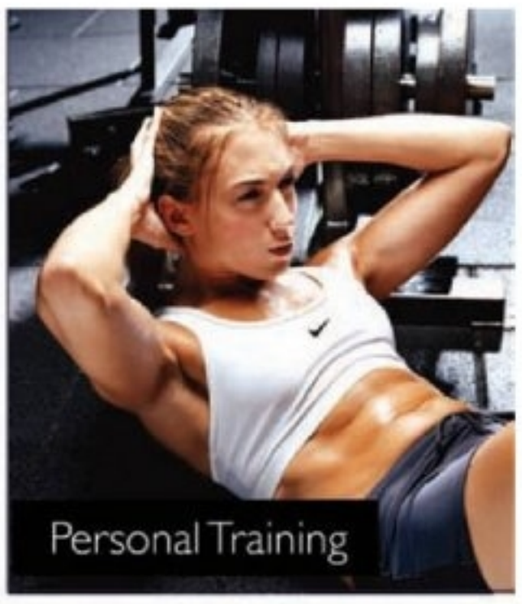

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☑ Check all boxes that apply to you

- Do you have leg heaviness or ache? ☐
- Do your legs burn, tingle or itch? ☐
- Do you have swelling in your legs or ankles? ☐
- Do you have skin discoloration on your legs or ankles (Blue/Brown)? ☐
- Is the skin on your legs red and dry? ☐
- Do you experience cramps in your legs, especially at nights? ☐
- Do you have non-healing wounds in your ankle areas? ☐
- Do you have spider veins on your legs and/or ankles? ☐
- Do the veins in your legs appear very dark blue or purple? ☐
- Is the pain in your legs worse after sitting or standing a long period of time? ☐
- Did you any of your parents or grandparents have varicose veins? ☐
- Do you have restless legs? ☐

If you have checked one or more of the boxes, please do yourself a favor and call USA Vein Clinics.

Do Not Postpone Treatment

Varicose veins can start out as a seemingly small problem, but left untreated, can become much more serious. Complications of varicose veins may include ulcers. These may form on the skin near the affected veins, particularly near the ankles. They are caused by fluid build-up in the dysfunctional veins, and can be extremely painful.

Dysfunctional veins can also increase the risk of blood clots. Patients may experience a swelling in the leg, which may indicate a blood clot. Left untreated, these clots can travel through the bloodstream and lodge near the heart or lungs, causing potentially life-threatening health problems.

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The founders knew only flintlocks

I am just a dumb Iraq combat veteran. I don't claim to have any understanding of the most recent tragedy in Connecticut or the many others that have occurred in my lifetime.

Perhaps evil just exists. Perhaps no amount of gun-control legislation or gun-control enforcement will prevent these horrific tragedies. I don't believe this. No sane human being can believe that the 40 signers of the U.S. Constitution, almost exclusively southern farmers and northern aristocrats, could have envisioned the caches of automatic and semiautomatic weaponry currently in the hands of our citizenry.

LARRY D. FOWLER, VIA E-MAIL

"No sane human being can believe the 40 signers ... could have envisioned the caches of automatic ... weaponry."

Bereaved should stay out of papers

RE: "FUNERALS BEGIN FOR CONNECTICUT SLAIN CHILDREN" (METRO, DEC. 18) In today's journalistic landscape, there is a point where "newsworthy" becomes gratuitous, even voyeuristic. Metro crossed that line yesterday when it featured a photo of a mother of one of the children slain in Newtown arriving for his funeral. Many news organizations defend these choices by claiming that's what the public wants. As one of the leading news providers in many major cities, Metro now has an opportunity to use its influence to forge a new path and dare to treat its news subjects and its readers with the respect they deserve. How about it?

JANINE M. DOHERTY, VIA E-MAIL

Guns, fire, cars: Anything's dangerous in the wrong hands

Every time there is another mass murder by a criminal, they want to take away the right to bear arms by law-abiding citizens. I see where they are comparing the deaths by guns in countries where guns are illegal to America where we have the right to bear arms and coming to the wrong conclusion.

The comparison should be how many murders were committed. When criminals don't have guns they will use knives, bats, chains, poison, cars and bombs to kill people. The gun is just the instrument.

Because some people use their car to run over people, should we ban cars? Because some people get beaten to death, should we ban bats and tire irons? Because some people employ Molotov cocktails in their murders, should we ban glass bottles and gasoline? Because some blow up people, should we outlaw fertilizer?

No, to all the above. Banning guns is not the answer. Law-abiding citizens could not defend themselves against the criminals who will still have guns

MARY FISHER, VIA E-MAIL

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words.
Metro reserves the right to edit all letters.
Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** It could be the fateful time when some of your past efforts will be coming home to roost. You'll quickly discover all that hard work you've done will not have been in vain.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** Although you might have to once again deal with a matter that has given you much trouble, this time experience and wisdom are on your side. You'll come out ahead.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Resurrecting an old enterprise that you were once quite enthusiastic about might be a good idea. You'll be glad you didn't scrap it, because you now possess the missing pieces.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** You're likely to do much better working with some trusted and competent intermediaries than handling a ticklish problem all on your own. It's smart to use all of your resources.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** This might be the best day of the week to spend some time on one of your more meaningful objectives, so try to do so. You might not have the luxury for long.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** Someone you like and whom you've known for a while is much fonder of you than you have reason to believe. He or she might supply evidence of this.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** Don't place a lot of significance on some early, discomforting developments, even if they appear to be pretty harsh. Luck will be on your side as the day progresses.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** A close associate will make a tough decision that will have reverberations in your life. After the dust settles, you'll realize its benefits.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** This could be a very profitable time if you're both practical and prudent in involvements of a financial or material nature. You'll be smart when both buying and selling.

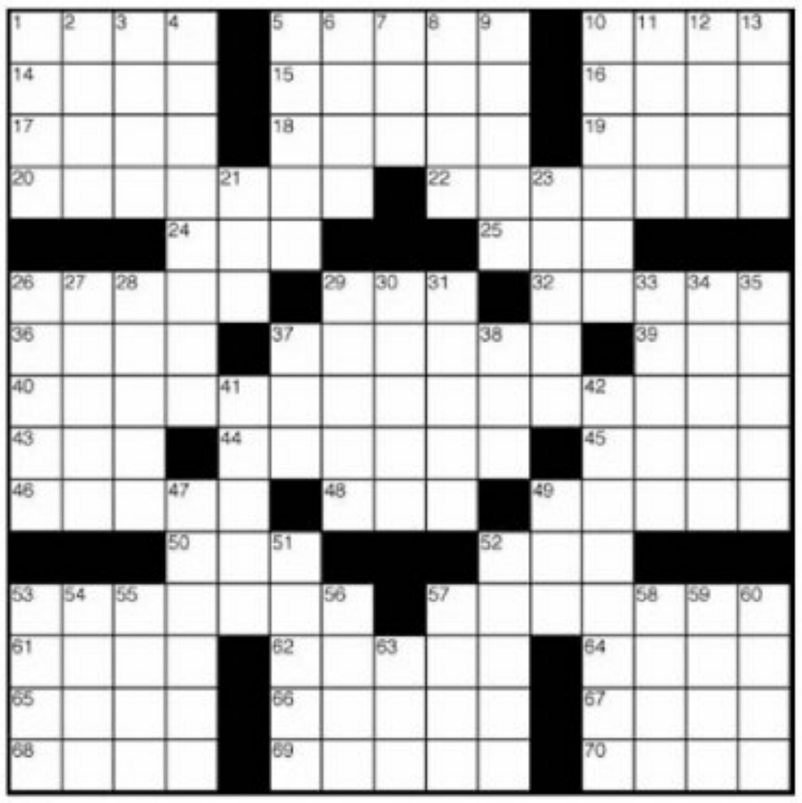
♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** If you're prepared to take a calculated risk, an endeavor in which you're presently involved could be substantially advanced. Be sure to think things out fully if you expect success.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Trying to quietly go about doing good deeds without drawing any attention to it is a laudable goal. However, once word gets out — and it will — everyone will know of your kindness.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Something you've wanted to accomplish isn't a lock, but it's not as complex as you've led yourself to believe, either. You'll quickly find this out once you tackle it. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

Across
1 "Eso —" (Paul Anka tune)
5 Muffler
10 Perseverance
14 Tel —
15 Kind of eclipse
16 Avatar of Vishnu
17 Ceremony
18 Brooklyn Dodger great
19 John, in Wales
20 Smudged
22 Kind of zoo
24 Embroider
25 Any miss
26 Held one's own
29 Good buddy
32 A moon of Jupiter
36 Wings, in botany
37 Gray
39 Old PC system
40 Really picky (hyph.)
43 Found a perch
44 Victoria's consort
45 Hat or umbrella —
46 Band mate of Mick
48 Weathervane dir.
49 Bloodhound's clue
50 Mouse alert
52 Bewildered response
53 Pina — (rum drinks)
57 Computer screen
61 Psyche's suitor
62 Gimmicks
64 Wagner's earth goddess
65 Broad valley
66 Aim
67 Bird-feeder treat
68 Plumbing bends
69 NASA rocket
70 Prefix for "trillion"

Down
1 Cutting remark
2 Malicious
3 In — (as found)
4 Foreman
5 Fling
6 Woman on campus
7 Scarfed
8 Speak hoarsely
9 Bolts
10 Grimm maiden
11 Shankar the sitarist
12 Somali supermodel
13 Zingy taste
21 Checkers side
23 I thought — never leave!
26 Make watertight
27 Kukla's friend
28 Ms. LaBelle
29 Lets slip
30 Pink wines
31 Beyond the fringe
33 Delight in
34 Normandy city
35 Money in the bank
37 Grey Cup org.
38 Telegraph signal
41 Exclaimed over
42 Scratchiest
47 Fluffs, as hair
49 Grab some rays
51 Phi Beta —
52 Throws a party
53 Yield, as territory
54 Out loud
55 Lounge around
56 Vegas machine
57 Chatty starling
58 Authentic
59 River to the Baltic
60 — - — -tat-tat
63 Heating fuel



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5						9		
				4		5		3
		8		2	7			1
	7						3	
9			6	3		4		
1		5		7				
		7						5
3		4	1	9			6	

SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

				3		6	5	
	5			7			1	
8		1			4		7	
9	4		3					
	1	7				8	3	
					7		4	5
	8		7			1		2
	3			4			6	
	7	2		9				

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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Road to New Orleans appears longer today

Pats likely waved goodbye to a bye in loss to 49ers ◗ Team looks to be locked into No. 3 seed ◗ Denver has pair of cupcakes remaining ◗ Houston unlikely to drop last two games

It was all going to work out great for the Patriots.

They'd beat the San Francisco 49ers on Sunday night and be left with the lowly Jacksonville Jaguars and Miami Dolphins to wrap up the year.

With the No. 2 seed, they'd get a week off as a reward, and then a home game in the AFC divisional round. With a win there, it would most likely be off to Houston. The Pats just crushed them — it would be a cakewalk — then on to the Super Bowl. Except they didn't beat San Francisco.

So long, No. 2 seed. Hello, wild card weekend.

As it stands now, the Patriots are the No. 3 seed, and based on the Broncos' — now the No. 2 seed — next two games (vs. Cleveland, vs. Kansas City), it would be quite the surprise to see the Pats back at No. 2 this season.

So, what's it all mean? It means New England will have to take the long road to the Super Bowl — if they get there at all. It looks as if the Pats will be hosting either the Bengals or the Steelers in early January if things play out as expected. Both AFC North teams will face off this Sunday. If Cincy wins, it's theirs. If Pittsburgh wins, it's theirs to lose in Week 17.

If you're a Patriots fan, you probably don't want to see a healthier Ben Roethlisberger and the Steelers' top-of-the-line pass defense pulling into Gillette Stadium. On the other hand, Bengals wide receiver A.J. Green could run laps around the Pats secondary. And speaking of "Green," don't forget good friend Ben-Jarvus Green-Ellis.

But say the Pats win on wild card weekend — great. Then it's on to Denver and the mile-high air to face a Broncos team looking for revenge after their loss to the Patriots back in Week 5.

Are the Pats banged up from the week before? Does an extra week of rest and preparation put the Broncos over the top?

These are questions we — unfortunately — could be asking in a few weeks.

JIMMY TOSCANO
sports@metro.us

Loser's mentality

The Pats may want to drop one of their next two.

A loss to Jacksonville or Miami would likely drop the Pats to the No. 4 seed, giving them a seemingly easier path with Indy and Houston in the first two rounds. The Pats beat the Colts and Texans handily this year.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ The Patriots could very well renew their rivalry with the Steelers on wild card weekend.

3

In the news

Bradley practices

Celtics defensive stopper Avery Bradley took part in a full practice Monday in Chicago. Bradley had surgery on both shoulders. There is no word on when he will return for game action.

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Entertain like the best

Martha Stewart doesn't do appetizers, won't serve red wine and — surprise! — sends e-mail invitations She shares her tips for hosting the perfect party

Dream of hosting epic get-togethers that will spread like wildfire on Instagram and Pinterest, but have yet to organize something more involved than cheese and crackers? You, aspiring hostess, need a thought-out game plan, so we checked in with domestic powerhouse Martha Stewart (consider it an early Christmas present).

"I always have a Christmas open house," she explains. "This year I've decided to do brunch."

Here, she takes us through her personal party prep. Take notes, people!

Start with the right company

"The first thing I do is create my guest list. I have a basic list of my friends and then people who I've added to it throughout the year. I send out a save-the-date. Then I send out an e-mail invitation — but it's embedded in my e-mail so it opens immediately. You don't have to go clicking here and clicking there. It's very important to me. I don't click on an envelope that opens up. Right click here and download pictures — I don't go for that stuff."

Plan your menu

"Next I start on the menu planning. What do I really want to cook? What do I really want to serve? After the menu planning comes the shopping list."

Dive into a theme

"Two weeks before the party make sure you have everything you need for decorating and [put it up]. We lost a lot of trees in Sandy, so I'm using a lot of fallen trees as decoration. All my big trays are slabs of wood cut from the trees that fell down. And I made beautiful coasters from 3-inch-diameter branches that are sliced very thinly. You have to think of a theme — is it woodland or what is it? I have a theme for all of my parties. I think it's fun."

Create signature drinks

"Make a really good drink from fresh juices, the best ingredients, and serve it in beautiful glasses. I'll also serve white wine. I don't serve red wine in my house because I don't want people to spill it — unless it's a seated dinner. We're going to have homemade bloody marys with homemade tomato juice, eggnog and hot mulled white wine. You have to be a little creative, thoughtful and adventurous."

▶ "You have to be creative, thoughtful and adventurous," says Stewart about being a good host.

"REPRINTED FROM THE BOOK MARTHA'S ENTERTAINING: A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS BY MARTHA STEWART. COPYRIGHT © 2011 BY MARTHA STEWART. PHOTOGRAPH COPYRIGHT © 2011 BY FRÉDÉRIC LAGRANGE. PUBLISHED BY CLARKSON POTTER, A DIVISION OF RANDOM HOUSE, INC."

TINA CHADHA
tina.chadha@metro.us

Dazzle at your dinner party

"Make sure you make time to be friendly to your guests and acknowledge everybody's presence. Try to matchmake a little with the people that you think should meet each other."

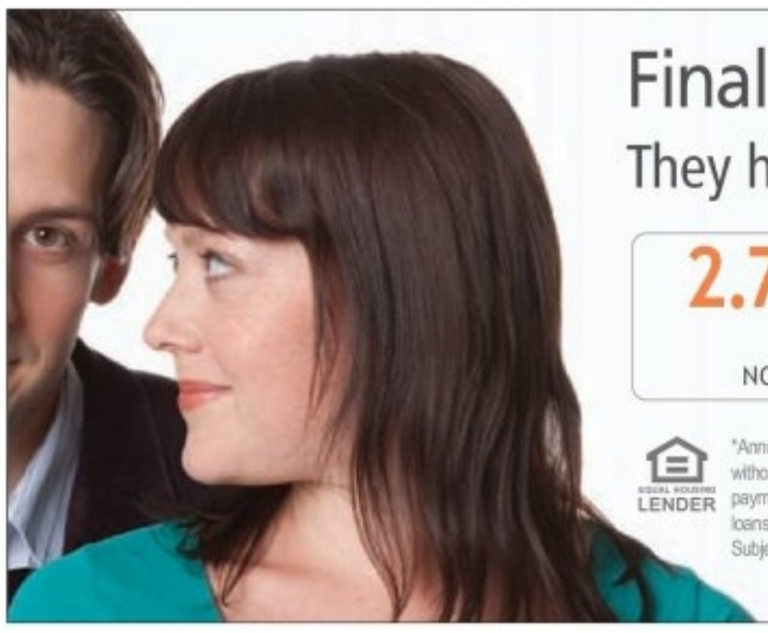
"I like to set the table for a plated and served dinner unless I'm having a very large crowd. When creating a seating chart for served dinners, I always break up couples and seat new people next to one another. I also always put myself in the least-comfortable spot. For a crowd larger than what my tables will hold seated, I will serve a buffet dinner."

"Having cocktails premade ensures you won't spend the whole party fixing drinks and you can instead devote your attention to your guests."

Martha muses

Cooking dinner? Skip the apps

"I don't like serving appetizers because I always have really good food and I don't want people to get stuffed on appetizers. I rarely have them, and if I do it's really something simple — but special — like homemade puff pastry cheese straws right out of the oven."



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METRO CREDIT UNION

at home with metro

▶ A private home decoration for the holidays showcases Winston Flowers' approach to letting your guests know that you went all out.

WINSTON FLOWERS

And exactly how should we deck those halls?

It takes more than boughs of holly to make a great holiday setup for your place Winston Flowers' head event designer shares some secrets

Regardless of any religious beliefs you may or may not hold, holiday home decorating brightens up the darkest days of the year. For those who haven't yet decked their halls, Benjamin Newbold, Winston Flowers' head event designer who creates spectacular public Christmas displays and brings seasonal swagger to private homes, offers Metro inspiration and tips.

Let it get personal:
"The fun part about holiday decorating is it's very sentimental and personal," says Newbold. "Christmas is one of those times when it's all about you and your home. The traditional evergreens and red-and-green look great, but if your home is more modern, then keeping it organic with grays, greens and browns might work better."

Be yourself:

"No matter what you choose," says Newbold, "this is your home, this is your life. Don't decorate from something you see in a magazine if it's not you."

Think sustainability:
The main trend for the season is sustainability, with berries, pine cones and leaves taking the place of plastic baubles. "People are using more organic elements in their holiday decor. Less is thrown in the trash. People reuse ornaments and hold onto them. They become sentimental," says Newbold.

Take advantage of this time of the year:
There's little rationality to seasonal decorating, says Newbold: "Pine cones exist in nature year-round, yet this is the only time of year that we bring them into our homes. Also, poinsettias are tropical plants —how did they come into the Christmas picture?"

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LUCIO LECCE / WINSTON FLOWERS

▶ This holiday tree with a nautical theme and rope garland is on display now at Boston Harbor Hotel.

Newbold's Top 3 tree tips

- **Pick a sturdy one:** "Run your hand down the boughs and if a lot of needles come off, then the tree had a bad season, or it's old. If you have a lot of ornaments, choose a Frasier or Noble Pine that will hold the weight."
- **Do some design planning:** "It's best to put the lights on first so they don't tangle with the ornaments."
- **Look at the colors and shapes of your ornaments.** "Lay them on a table and see what works together. Secure them well — wire usually works better than ribbons."
- **Call it quits:** "Know when to stop. Don't throw everything at the tree. If the boughs droop, you've probably gone too far!" Find more info at **www.winstonflowers.com.**

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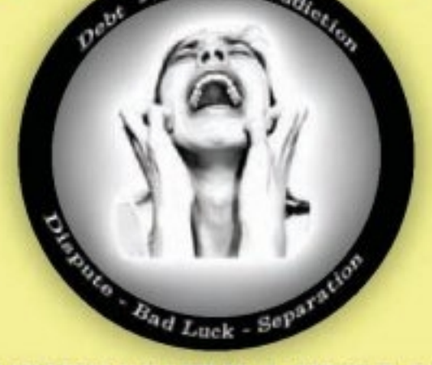

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CHRISTMAS MUSINGS

By Attorney George Warshaw

With Christmas upon us, Hanukah just past, and the great spirit that goes along with it, perhaps we should be thankful not only for the holidays but that we survived this long.

With the economy on a roller coaster, real estate optimistically revived from the dead, and incomprehensible shootings of innocent children and people becoming a weekly occurrence, it gives one pause to wonder where we are going and where have we gone wrong.

The beauty of the holiday season, both Christian and Jewish, is to give one reason to look around, be thankful for what you have, be generous and forgiving to others, and consider how you can make next year better for you and those around you.

Not an easy task, but not impossible either. And with that, keep this old verse in mind the next few days.

"He sprang to his sleigh,
to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew
like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim,
'ere he drove out of sight,
"Happy Christmas to all,
and to all a good-night!"

GWA

See you next year! © 2012 George Warshaw.

George Warshaw is a real estate attorney and author. He represents buyers and sellers of homes and condos in Massachusetts, and prepares wills, trusts, and estate plans. George welcomes new clients and questions at metro@warshawlaw.com.

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